

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. ~~A server for handling information which is in different~~  
 modal forms suitable for more than one mode of user interface, the server  
 5 comprising:  
     an internet interface for supporting one or more connections on the  
     internet;  
     a terminal interface for supporting one or more connections from  
     the server to user terminals, and for passing information in at least one of  
 10 the modal forms; and  
     a service controller for controlling input or output of the  
     information on the terminal interface and the internet interface, and for  
     processing the information received from or sent to either interface,  
     according to its modal form.
- 15 2. The server of claim 1, the service controller being operable to  
 interact with a user having a multi-modal terminal, and to select which  
 modal form or forms to use.
- 20 3. The server of claim 2, the service controller being arranged to make  
 the selection according to the content of the information, and the context  
 of the interaction.
- 25 4. The server of claim 1, the service controller being operable to  
 receive inputs in different modes simultaneously from the same user, to  
 resolve any conflicts, and determine an intention of the user based on the  
 inputs.
- 30 5. The server of claim 1, the terminal interface being arranged to  
 recognise speech as an input.
6. The server of claim 1, the terminal interface being arranged to  
 generate audio as an output mode.
- 35 7. The server of claim 1, service controller being arranged to conduct  
 a dialogue with the user in the form of a sequence of interactions.

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9. The server of claim 1, further comprising means for initiating a connection to the user's terminal.

11. The server of claim 1, comprising a set of servlets arranged to communicate with each other by event driven messages.

a telephony interface for receiving or making a telephone call, and arranged to interact with a user on the call by recognising speech or generating audio signals;

a controller for controlling interaction between the telephony interface and the internet interface.

13 The server of claim 12; the controller being operable to interact with a user having a terminal capable of handling telephony or internet communications, the controller further being operable to select which of these to use when sending information to the terminal, and to convert the information to suit the selected type of communication.

14. A method of using a server to handle information in different modal forms suitable for more than one mode of user interface, and comprising the steps of:

- supporting one or more connections on the internet;
- supporting one or more connections from the server to the user terminals;

passing information in different modal forms between the user and the server;

~~controlling input or output of the information on the terminal and internet interfaces; and~~

processing the information received from or sent to either interface, according to its modal form.

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15. A method of using a multi-modal service provided by a server on the internet, the server having an internet interface for supporting one or more connections on the internet, a terminal interface for supporting a connection to a user of the service, and for passing information in at least one of the modal forms; and a service controller for controlling input or output of information on the terminal interface and the internet interface, and for processing the information received from or sent to either interface, according to its modal form, the method comprising the steps of:

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providing input to the terminal interface of the server;

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engaging in a dialogue with the server to cause the server to process the information according to its modal form; and

receiving a response from the terminal interface of the server, according to the result of the information processing.

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16. Software on a computer readable medium for carrying out a method of using a server to handle information in different modal forms suitable for more than one mode of user interface, the method comprising the steps of:

supporting one or more connections on the internet;

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supporting one or more connections from the server to the user terminals;

passing information in different modal forms between the user and the server;

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controlling input or output of the information on the terminal and internet interfaces; and

processing the information received from or sent to either interface, according to its modal form.

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